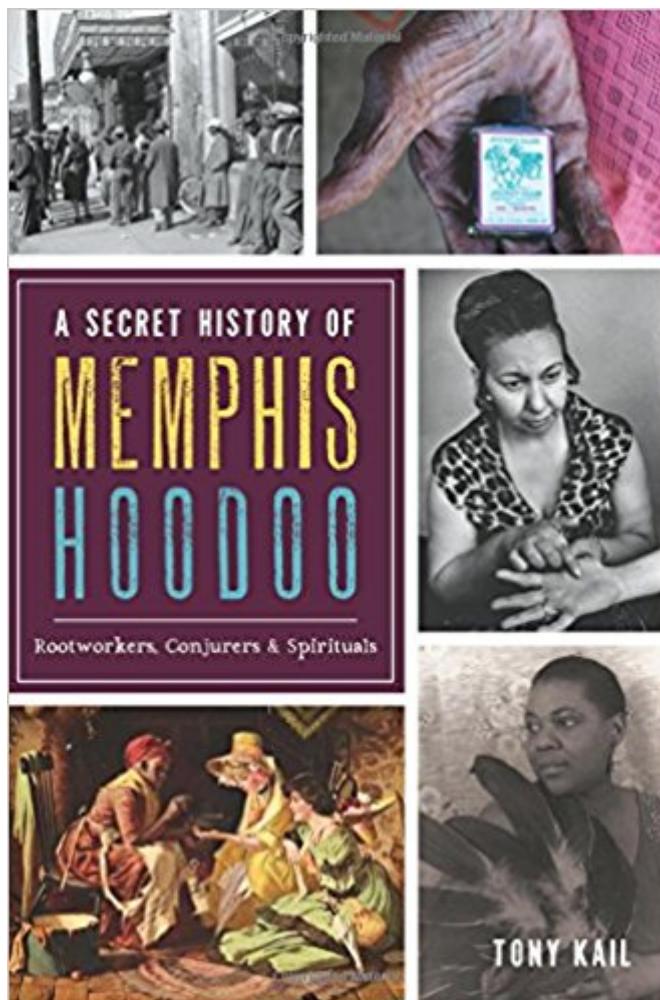


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# Secret History Of Memphis Hoodoo, A: Rootworkers, Conjurers & Spirituals



## Synopsis

Widely known for its musical influence, Beale Street was also once a hub for Hoodoo culture. Many blues icons, such as Big Memphis Ma Rainey and Sonny Boy Williamson, dabbled in the mysterious tradition. Its popularity in some African American communities throughout the past two centuries fueled racial tension--practitioners faced social stigma and blame for anything from natural disasters to violent crimes. However, necessity sometimes outweighed prejudice, and even those with the highest social status turned to Hoodoo for prosperity, love or retribution. Author Tony Kail traces this colorful Memphis heritage, from the arrival of Africans in Shelby County to the growth of conjure culture in juke joints and Spiritual Churches.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Ã¢â€œA Secret History of Memphis Hoodoo: Rootworkers, Conjurers and SpiritualsÃ¢â€¢ reveals the stories and legends of conjurers and healers from the arrival of African slaves on Memphis plantations to blues musicians on Beale Street. You will never see Memphis the same after reading this book!"-Preston Lauterbach Preston Lauterbach Author of Beale Street

DynastyWith A Secret History of Memphis Hoodoo Tony Kail offers an accessible primer for the casual reader with detailed historical accounts of a global tradition manifesting in a local setting - Memphis and the surrounding countryside of West Tennessee and the north Mississippi Delta. Kail's research is richly layered and timely, a welcome challenge to prejudice and disinformation in a rapidly changing world. Ã¢â€œ Judith McWillie, Professor Emerita, the Lamar Dodd School of

Art, the University of Georgia. Judith McWillie, Professor Emerita, the Lamar Dodd School of Art, the University of Georgia"Anthropologist Tony Kail has been writing for years about cultural beliefs and practices that do not rely on establishment-defined, "respectable" reality. In *The Secret History of Memphis Hoodoo: Rootworkers, Conjurors & Spirituals*, his research focuses on the way Memphis became a center of a flourishing folk culture. Loosely known as Hoodoo, this culture had roots in Africa, slavery, and the Bible, as well as ties to the blues and other aspects of the religious and commercial life of Memphis." Chapter16.org

Tony Kail is an ethnographer and writer. He holds a degree in cultural anthropology and has researched magico-religious cultures for more than twenty-five years. His work has taken him from Voodoo ceremonies in New Orleans to Haitian Botanicas in Harlem and Spiritual Churches in East Africa. He has lectured at more than one hundred universities, hospitals and public safety agencies. Kail has been featured on CNN Online, the History Channel and numerous radio, television and print outlets. A resident of Humboldt, Tennessee, Kail was raised in Memphis and calls it his second home.

I'm so glad I read this book. The historical and cultural information about hoodoo in Memphis is absolutely fascinating.

I heard Tony Kail speak at the 1st Annual Mystic South Conference and realized that some of my family's practices were based in Hoodoo even though they are devout Baptists.

Very interesting book and delivered to our home is wonderful

Hoodoo is a American folk-magic tradition that travelled from Africa to the new world with those Americans who entered as victims of chattel slavery. Hoodoo, Conjure and Root-work as it is commonly known, quickly became powerful force in the lives of both whites and African Americans while remaining a secret, often hidden-in-plain sight practice that co-existed alongside Christianity and church life. Each area of the country had its own flavor of Hoodoo and the Memphis region was no exception. Mr. Kail an anthropologist and author, has thoroughly researched the Memphis tradition and added many scholarly elements from notable in this often over-looked aspect of spiritual/religious life in America. His writing style is engaging and enchanting and I suspect that once you pick up "A secret history...you will not be able to put it down. I cannot praise this title

enough as it adds much to the subject and the research of this great American spiritual tradition. The characters and practices are fascinating and best of all, they are real and you are learning about a magical practice that is still very much alive today.

Fascinating book about Voodoo practices in Memphis Tenn. A little different perspective as most people connect American voodoo practice only with New Orleans . The author writes a well researched and intriguing book on Voodoo in our native city. The photos are excellent.

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